

**REPORT****WORKSHOP ON NOVEL TELECOMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES FOR
SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
BEIRUT, 11-13 JULY 2005****Summary**

The Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and Alcatel jointly organized the Workshop on Novel Telecommunication Technologies for Socio-Economic Development (Beirut, 11-13 July 2005) in line with the Letter of Understanding of 27 January 2005 between them and within the framework of the Regional Plan of Action for Building the Information Society (RPoA), which seeks to harness information and communication technologies (ICTs) for employment creation and poverty alleviation. The Workshop was attended by 41 participants from eight countries, who represented telecommunication operators and service providers, Governments, selected international experts, businesses, associations, in addition to national, international and regional organizations.

The Workshop was aimed at launching concrete actions for the implementation of the three regional projects that were proposed by Alcatel during the Partners Forum (Damascus, 21 November 2004), which was held in conjunction with the Second Regional Preparatory Conference for the World Summit on the Information Society (Damascus, 22-23 November 2004). Specifically, the Workshop sought to raise awareness on and initiate partnerships for pilot projects related to market information systems for agriculture and fishing businesses, broadband access to the private and public sectors, and use of an existing regional partnership centre for incubating telecommunications projects. Following presentations and discussions of project ideas, participants emerged with a number of pilot projects on the following: (a) the implementation of market information systems for agriculture products and for health services; (b) the provision of broadband access for educational content and for strengthening community centres; and (c) the formulation of a regional framework for broadband deployment in the ESCWA region. Alcatel and ESCWA are set to facilitate the execution of these pilot projects by providing support in the development of concept papers, assisting in the fund-raising process, ensuring that partnerships are adequate, and following up on the implementation towards the established goals.

CONTENTS

	<i>Paragraphs</i>	<i>Page</i>
Introduction	1-6	3
<i>Chapter</i>		
I. OUTCOME OF THE WORKSHOP	7-19	3
A. Pilot projects related to the market information systems	8-13	4
B. Pilot projects related to broadband access	14-18	5
C. Regional hub for promoting innovative ICT ventures	19	7
II. WORKSHOP TOPICS	20-32	7
A. Market information systems.....	20-23	7
B. Broadband access development with Digital Subscriber Lines (DSL)	24-29	8
C. Partnership centre for value-added applications	30-32	9
III. ORGANIZATION OF WORK	33-39	9
A. Venue and dates	33	9
B. Opening.....	34-36	9
C. Participants.....	37	10
D. Agenda	38	10
E. Documents	39	10

LIST OF ANNEXES

I. List of participants.....	11
II. List of documents	14

Introduction

1. The Workshop on Novel Telecommunication Technologies for Socio-Economic Development (Beirut, 11-13 July 2005) was jointly organized by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and Alcatel. It was organized within the framework of the Regional Plan of Action for Building the Information Society (RPoA), which seeks to harness information and communication technologies (ICTs) for employment creation and poverty alleviation; and forms part of the joint activities by ESCWA and Alcatel that were formalized by the Letter of Understanding of 27 January 2005.
2. Acting within its mandate, ESCWA plays a key role in building the information society in Western Asia. Within the context of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), the Workshop was held in line with the global preparatory process for the second phase of WSIS, to be held in Tunis from 16 to 18 November 2005.
3. The Workshop was aimed at launching concrete actions for the implementation of the three regional projects that were proposed by Alcatel within the framework of its Digital Bridge Initiative and presented during the Partners Forum (Damascus, 21 November 2004), which was held in conjunction with the Second Regional Preparatory Conference for WSIS (Damascus, 22-23 November 2004).¹
4. Subsequent to the inclusion of these three projects in the RPoA,² the Workshop sought to raise awareness on and initiate partnerships for the design and implementation of pilot projects related to the following: (a) market information systems for agriculture and fishing businesses, emulating a successful business model in Senegal; (b) development of broadband access in the private and public sectors; and (c) use of an existing partnership centre for incubating telecommunications projects, which respond to local needs through added-value applications and services, and the use of mobile networks infrastructure.
5. The main focus areas of work include the following: (a) enhancing the living conditions of communities living from agriculture and fishing activities through ICT-based market information systems; (b) increasing the efficiency of educational, health and governmental institutions; (c) improving the competitiveness of enterprises; (d) building capacities of the population through broadband penetration within the region; and (e) improving the services offered by telecommunication operators and leveraging their potential benefits for local socio-economic development by developing added-value applications.
6. The Workshop encouraged participants to consider a number of ideas for pilot projects that promote socio-economic development in the region. These project ideas need to be developed into concept papers for regional projects that have national components. Moreover, several participants indicated their interest in partnering and/or leading some of these projects. Alcatel and ESCWA could facilitate the implementation of these projects by providing support in developing the concept papers, assisting in fund raising, ensuring that partnerships are adequate, identifying lead organizations that are committed to the success of the project, and following up on the project implementation towards the achievement of established objectives. Whenever necessary, Alcatel and/or ESCWA may become partners in selected projects.

I. OUTCOME OF THE WORKSHOP

7. During the three-day Workshop, working groups agreed on a list of pilot projects aimed at using novel telecommunication technologies for socio-economic development. These projects target the implementation of market information systems for agriculture and fishing products and for health services in rural areas; seek to provide broadband access for educational content through community centres; and aim at formulating a regional framework for broadband deployment in the ESCWA region. With the continuous collaboration of Alcatel, ESCWA will produce concept papers for the pilot projects and post them on the Internet as part of an online discussion forum between concerned parties. The list of potential partners is dynamic and subject

¹ Details and documents of the Partners Forum and the Second Regional Preparatory Conference for WSIS are available at: www.escwa.org.lb/wsisis/conference2/main.html.

² A description of these projects is available at: www.escwa.org.lb/wsisis/meetings/11-13july/main.html.

to change. Moreover, following the drafting of these concept papers, funding institutions and investors would be sought for the subsequent phases of the pilot projects. These projects are outlined below in sections A, B and C, including a short description and a table of the general objectives, main activities and potential partners for each project.

A. PILOT PROJECTS RELATED TO THE MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEMS

1. *Market information system for agriculture and fishing products*

8. The market information system (MIS) project presents the case that deploying telecommunication infrastructure in rural areas is both essential for their development and lucrative for the mobile operators. By providing cost-effective innovative services that can be easily interfaced to any mobile operator and Internet infrastructures, the MIS project offers value-added services that contribute towards the improvement of the daily life of farmers and fishermen. These services include the following: (a) information on, among others, prices, standards, good practices and alarms for fishermen; (b) trade assistance, including exploitation management and resources management; (c) supply chain management, including directory of suppliers, access to loans, analyses and controls; and (d) marketing, including invitations to tender, negotiations and transactions.

TABLE 1. MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR AGRICULTURE AND FISHING PRODUCTS

General objective	To develop market access and business opportunities for stakeholders in the agriculture sector and to improve the living conditions of farmers by using such mobile telephone technologies as Multimedia Messaging Systems (MMS), Short Messaging Systems (SMS) and mobile Internet
Main activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feasibility study, including a market analysis of the agricultural sector • Financial and technical study for project design and implementation • Development of the MIS application • Deployment of a pilot project • Evaluation of the project outcome • Dissemination by piloting similar projects to cover more rural areas in the region
Potential partners	Public and private bodies, associations, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) working in the field of rural community and agriculture development, ministries of agriculture and telecommunication, mobile operators, application developers and donors

9. Additionally, the project contributes to improving the Average Revenue Per User (ARPU) of mobile operators, thereby increasing their coverage of under-served rural areas and bringing larger scale deployments.

10. Participants from Lebanon expressed interest in the partnership opportunities for an MIS in Lebanon, and in the details of the successful case study of Senegal that was implemented by Manobi, an ICT company with pioneering expertise of MIS in Senegal and South Africa. The potential partners for an MIS for agriculture products in Lebanon include the René Moawad Foundation, the Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture of Beirut and Mount Lebanon, the Ministry of Agriculture and Manobi.

11. Participants from Spacotel Yemen expressed their interest in launching an MIS project for the benefit of farmers and fishermen in Yemen. A workshop involving Alcatel, Manobi and Spacotel Yemen will be conducted in Yemen in the coming months aimed at launching such a project.

12. The National Information Technology Centre (NITC) of Jordan favoured adapting an MIS to the needs of farmers in the Jordan Valley with the objective of using ICTs to improve their livelihood and to create job opportunities in the rural communities. With NITC as lead organization, the potential partners could include the Ministry of Agriculture, local NGOs and an application developer such as Manobi.

2. Market information system for health services

13. The aim of this project is to make medical information available to rural and disadvantaged areas throughout the region by using wireless platforms, including cellular telephones, MMS and Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) technologies. In addition to supplying general health information, this system could provide access to health care professionals at remote locations, thereby promoting consultation and emergency medical assistance.

TABLE 2. MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEM FOR HEALTH SERVICES

General objective	To provide emergency and follow-up medical services to rural areas with the aim of offering fast access to emergency health care, reducing travel time, creating a centralized database of regional health care services and records of personal medical history, and cutting down on costs of travel and accommodation in cities
Main activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing a database with the coordinates of medical staff and establishments that will provide the health care services, including doctors, nurses and hospitals • Providing users with mobile phones that support MMS, thereby enabling them to access e-health services via mobile phones and General Packet Radio Service (GPRS), and enabling the support staff to locate patients in cases of emergency • Designing and programming a Wireless Application Protocol (WAP) site to enable users to access the services, which comprise following up on doctor visits; sending or receiving consultation results, including, for example x-ray and blood test results, and vaccination programmes; tracking the development of diseases; and emergency calls • Developing and installing a content management system (CMS) for the administration of the WAP site via Web interface
Potential partners	For individuals: medical and pharmacy syndicates; for commercial entities: ministries of health, ministries of social affairs, insurance companies, application/service providers, mobile operators (to ensure prioritization and national scalability) local NGOs or volunteer groups, and donors

B. PILOT PROJECTS RELATED TO BROADBAND ACCESS

1. Using broadband for educational content

14. Broadband technology can enhance the educational options available to Arabic-speaking students. By using an e-learning modality, this project is aimed at assisting students in dispersed locations to further their educational goals on a flexible time schedule. By providing additional educational options to both traditional and non-traditional students, this valuable training can build human capital and improve the competitiveness of the workforce in the region.

TABLE 3. USING BROADBAND FOR EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

General objective	To provide broadband access for higher education, thereby fostering the development of e-learning educational content; to promote the Arabic content, thereby enriching current e-learning applications with greater interactivity and enhanced quality; and place specific emphasis on synchronous pedagogical modalities, including video conferencing, voice broadcasts and bi-directional messaging
Main activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying educational products best aligned to take advantage of the benefits of broadband technology • Developing and deploying new, innovative curricula using an e-learning delivery platform • Deploying and expanding the system to further subject areas, schools and user groups
Potential partners	Universities; providers of distance education in the private sector, including the Arab Open University; and ministries of education and higher education

15. Participants from the Higher Institute of Applied Sciences and Technology (HIAST) in the Syrian Arab Republic discussed the project with emphasis on the needs for technological educational content for higher education in that country particularly given the shortage of professors in technology fields. The

director of HIAST expressed their willingness to lead the implementation of this project in the Syrian Arab Republic, with emphasis on e-learning.

2. Broadband access for community centres

16. Use existing community centres, this project aims to disseminate broadband applications to rural areas, thereby providing the rural communities with the same quality and range of telecommunications services that are available in urban areas. This project is particularly useful for those applications that require broadband, including those based on multimodal technologies. Moreover, the project is set to pave the way for such added-value services as e-learning, e-government and digital content development.

TABLE 4. BROADBAND ACCESS FOR COMMUNITY CENTRES

General objective	To provide communities, particularly in rural areas, with fast, reliable and affordable access to the Internet, thereby extending various e-services and e-government applications
Main activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line (ADSL) transceivers in selected community centres and a DSL Access Multiplexes (DSLAM) at the Internet service provider for these centers • Providing multimedia applications with important socio-economic impact, including online training, e-learning and e-culture • Launching an awareness campaign through training on various broadband applications and their benefits for the community
Potential partners	Ministries of telecommunication, fixed lines operators and Internet service providers

17. Delegates from the Syrian Arab Republic, who represented the Ministry of Communications and Technology, the Syrian Telecom Establishment (STE) and the Syrian Computer Society, discussed the project in terms of the needs for the community centres in that country; and expressed interest in becoming partners for its implementation in the Syrian Arab Republic, with STE as lead agency.

3. Regional framework for deploying broadband in the ESCWA region

18. The overriding principle behind this project is to establish a regional task force representing different stakeholders in order to develop and adopt collectively a regional regulatory and business framework. This framework, which includes practical modalities based on facts and best-practices, could be envisaged as a reference umbrella for the region, thereby playing a similar role as that of the European Commission's broadband frameworks vis-à-vis European regulators. Once established, this task force could encourage, in close cooperation with the League of Arab States (LAS), Governments and policymakers to subscribe to the regional framework and could lead field trials and pilots, thereby accelerating deployment.

TABLE 5. REGIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR DEPLOYING BROADBAND IN THE ESCWA REGION

General objective	To assist ESCWA member countries in building a regional and business framework for broadband; to overcome barriers to the deployment of broadband services; and to propose approaches based on factual best practices in order to create a favourable environment for deployment
Main activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a fact book that describes the guidelines towards deployment of broadband • Building a mechanism for promoting broadband framework, solutions and models, which could be defined by a task force composed of leaders in the field from across the ESCWA region
Potential partners	National and regional NGOs; international and regional organizations, including the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Arab Regional Office, ESCWA, LAS, European Commission; operators, vendors and Internet services providers; and ministries of telecommunications and regulators

C. REGIONAL HUB FOR PROMOTING INNOVATIVE ICT VENTURES

19. Based on Alcatel’s experience of its Partnership Space in Cairo, the proposed project could establish a regional ICT-based incubator that facilitates the start-up of companies by providing financial, technical and managerial support to entrepreneurs at the development phase. The model could enable countries in the region to build on national and regional efforts towards the development of the information society.

TABLE 6. REGIONAL HUB FOR PROMOTING INNOVATIVE ICT VENTURES

General objective	To promote innovative models for incubating new ICT-related start-up companies through public/private partnership
Main activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing a regional hub for promoting innovative ICT ventures in order to provide administrative support and review the process for handling applications from the initial phase • Holding a regional workshop for decision-makers in the region on the new incubator model, lessons learned and results delivered by the successful implementation of the incubator model in Egypt • Assisting countries by deploying a “starter-kit”, which comprises the relevant documentation and instructional material to guide sponsoring Government in terms of, among others, formulating appropriate policies and exploring potential integration with existing incubator modalities
Potential partners	Ministries of ICT, higher education and research institutions, private sector ICT companies, with guidance and support from Alcatel and ESCWA

II. WORKSHOP TOPICS

A. MARKET INFORMATION SYSTEMS

20. The first topic of the Workshop, namely, market information systems for agriculture and fishing businesses, was preceded by an overview on poverty and unemployment in Western Asia, which highlighted the gravity of the current social situation that could further destabilize the region. Consequently, the discussion incorporated a review of the different opportunities for harnessing ICTs for employment creation and poverty alleviation, in addition to a summary of Internet-based software applications and hardware technologies that could empower the population and increase access to information. This was followed by a brief review of the importance of digital Arabic content; and a discussion on various components for devising implementation modalities.

21. The proposed implementation modalities focus on alleviating poverty in Western Asia by means of the following: (a) empowering and building the capabilities of the poor by using ICTs, thereby improving their chances for higher incomes; and (b) harnessing ICTs for developing entrepreneurial activities and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), thereby improving productivity, competitiveness and growth, and, consequently, job creation in these areas.

22. Within that context, an outline of a strategic plan was considered as a guideline to instigate national and regional actions aimed at harnessing ICTs for employment creation and poverty alleviation in the ESCWA region. This plan comprises seven pro-poor ICT-for-development policies and 20 priority projects for the region.

23. A project implemented in Senegal, which provides farmers with free access to market information service, formed the success story for the use of market information systems for agriculture and fisheries businesses. That project was realized through a partnership between Alcatel, Manobi and the leading Senegalese mobile operators, Sonatel. Specifically, Alcatel provided end-to-end communication solutions; and Manobi developed and deployed the application of mobile Internet and business services for agriculture sectors and rural areas. The project provided agribusinesses with value-added services with successful business models for General Systems for Mobile Communications (GSM) operators. Moreover, Manobi developed the market information system on SMS and the Internet, and provided farmers, traders and end-

users with free information on a daily basis on the prices of agriculture market products. This access to market information enabled farmers to negotiate better prices and find alternative markets for their produce, thereby increasing their revenues. Another pilot project for farmers has been recently put in place in South Africa through a partnership between Alcatel, Manobi and the leading South African mobile operator, Vodacom.

B. BROADBAND ACCESS DEVELOPMENT WITH DIGITAL SUBSCRIBER LINES (DSL)

24. Discussion focused on the concept of broadband and its development in the form of xDSL, which is a generic term used to describe all DSL technologies. Broadband was defined as a transmission medium capable of supporting at least 256 kilobits per second (kbps) as the sum of upload and download capacity. This level of transmission can support a wide range of applications ranging from audio streaming to video applications. Within the context of that definition, xDSL is a technology that brings novel high-bandwidth information to homes and small businesses over ordinary copper telephone lines.

25. Based on research performed by the Arab Advisors Group, a review of broadband and xDSL technologies revealed that only 13 Arab countries out of a total of 22 offered broadband services in the form of xDSL. By September 2004, Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia and United Arab Emirates deployed ADSL. Tunisia offered ADSL for corporate customers, while the remaining 13 countries offered ADSL for corporate and residential clients. While the residential 256 kbps ADSL services were provided in all countries, only four of these, namely, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, and Qatar, provided the services at all four speeds: 128 kbps, 256 kbps, 512 kbps and 1,024 kbps. The total annual cost of ADSL varies greatly between the countries; and cost comparisons were undertaken using monthly rates as a function of gross domestic product (GDP) per capita.

26. While broadband via xDSL is still not available in Lebanon, Palestine, Iraq and Yemen, there are plans for its introduction in those countries and territories. The discussions tackled the importance of telecom market liberalization in the Arab region as a facilitator, which leads to competition in the sector, particularly given the established link in other markets between competitive forces and service improvements and decreased costs.

27. A user-centric broadband vision was proposed to enhance and develop the information society in the region. The vision focused on connecting communities as a modality for creating new business opportunities in both urban and rural areas, thereby bringing wealth to those communities. Within that context, improved telecommunications can be a transformative force. Specifically, it can lead to improvements in health care and education, particularly for rural communities. Moreover, it can lead to improvements in such public services as e-government, public safety and security. This vision stresses the important role of broadband in facilitating the development of corporate and residential users on the same network.

28. The issue of deregulation was reviewed with the experience of France as a case study. This example covered such topics as broadband regulation, and the steps initiated by France to encourage competition and market forces. This review underscored the role of the regulator in terms of developing both the market and competition at all levels of the value chain. Additionally, this session explored the concept of Local Loop Unbundling (LLU) and its impact on the retail market. In the French model, for example, unbundling services were critical for fostering competition in broadband and resulted in a major transformation of the connectivity market in that country, which in turn paved the way for extensive use of broadband connectivity.

29. As part of this session, the role of Governments in fostering market growth was examined. High tax rates were cited as a limiter for economic development. Some private sector telecommunications representatives at the Workshop detailed their tax burdens, which in some cases reached approximately 30 per cent of revenues, and stressed the negative impact on their business models. All parties agreed that deregulation was a catalyst for market development and that, furthermore, deregulation could only succeed with strong political will. In that regard, the Syrian delegation detailed efforts aimed at providing broadband by using Worldwide Interoperability for Microwave Access (WiMax) technologies to cover the ubiquitous "last mile" of the broadband infrastructure.

C. PARTNERSHIP CENTRE FOR VALUE-ADDED APPLICATIONS

30. The Partnership Space, which Alcatel established in Cairo, was presented and followed by discussions with potential partners. The concept of a partnership space was underscored, with its aims of incubating innovative ideas in terms of relevant communication tools that meet local needs, and of building close partnerships on a long-term basis. Within that context, the Partnership Space by Alcatel was seen as a catalyst for innovative ideas related to value-added services in the telecommunication sector of Egypt. Within the framework of this application, Alcatel described its objective of seeking suitable partners to develop local information content and tailored services. The role of Alcatel in this regard is not to take control of these new services; rather it is to generate traffic on the network by engaging successful partners. Consequently, a committee of local experts selects the innovators for this incubator, who, typically, have the most leading ideas to be trained and coached over the Alcatel platform. Alcatel detailed its support for these selected potential partners in terms of providing the location as well as technical assistance in order to achieve innovative services. Following graduation from the incubator, Alcatel is set to provide a certificate to the start-up company and support its marketing measures.

31. Currently, five candidates have been selected in Egypt through such a process and are due to start their work shortly within the premises of the Partnership Space. Alcatel outlined plans to collaborate with ESCWA in order to convert the centre in Cairo into a regional centre, thereby incubating innovative services from across the ESCWA region.

32. There was a general consensus that the region could benefit from such a centre. Spacotel from Yemen mentioned that many young people in Arab countries possessed valuable ideas based on MMS, SMS and voice services; and that such an incubation centre could significantly assist them. However, participants expressed concern with regard to the limited space in the centre in Cairo, which can support a modest five or six candidates, and to the cost of travel and accommodation for candidates from other countries. However, given sufficient interest in other ESCWA member countries, the Partnership Space could be replicated in other Arab countries or affiliated offices could be established with an online connection to the regional office. Moreover, Alcatel stressed that it was prepared to develop a mechanism with ESCWA aimed at seeking potential candidates in the region, with ESCWA taking part in the selection committee.

III. ORGANIZATION OF WORK

A. VENUE AND DATES

33. The Workshop was held at United Nations House, Beirut, from 11 to 13 July 2005.

B. OPENING

34. The Workshop was opened by Mr. Omar Bizri, Chief of the Information and Communication Technology Division (ICTD) in ESCWA, who raised the context and objectives of the Workshop. With due reference to the cooperation between ESCWA and Alcatel, which was formally initiated with the signing of the Letter of Understanding between the two entities, he highlighted the three projects of the RPoA for building the information society, focusing on ICTs for employment creation and poverty alleviation. Moreover, he emphasized the formation of partnerships between various stakeholders as a key success of the projects and a cornerstone of efforts by ESCWA for building the information society. He stressed that the target benefits were more likely to be realized through partnership and collaboration among all stakeholders at national and regional levels; and called upon the participants to identify specific pilot projects locally or regionally in order to reap the benefits from the realization of these projects through partnerships. Within that context, he reiterated the commitment of ESCWA to play the role of facilitator for such projects.

35. Mr. Thierry Albrand, Vice-President of Digital Bridge at Alcatel, delivered the opening statement of Alcatel, highlighting the Digital Bridge Initiative that targets the realization of win-win projects that are based on the innovative usage of telecommunication infrastructure by providing high value-added services at a local level, particularly in underserved rural areas within emerging countries. These projects aim at improving the livelihoods of rural communities through the use telecommunication services, and result in

mutual benefits to telecommunication operators. He reviewed the steps that led to the development of the partnership agreement between ESCWA and Alcatel, from Alcatel's proposed three projects at the Partners Forum (Damascus, 21 November 2004), which were subsequently included in the RPoA for building the information society, to the signing of the Letter of Understanding between the two entities that formalized their cooperation activities and that resulted in their joint organization of the Workshop. In the area of telecommunications and in line with the Millennium Development Goals, all communities need connectivity by 2015. Within those stated targets, Alcatel established two partnership centres to promote local ideas, namely, in Tunis in 2003, and in Cairo in 2005.

36. Mr. Mansour Farah, Senior Information Technology Officer and Team Leader of ICTD in ESCWA elaborated on the RPoA for building the information society and the follow-up for its implementation. He indicated that the RPoA, which resulted from collaboration efforts between various stakeholders, was a model of decentralized partnership and was essentially based on results-based management principles. Within that context, it was modular, expansible and market-driven, while taking into account the priorities of Governments. Specified lead organizations were responsible for the implementation of the RPoA projects; and each project could be launched on maturity. Moreover, he reviewed the strategic framework of the RPoA, with its interconnected partnership programmes and 10 focus areas of action; and highlighted the total of 38 projects that are currently in the plan, including the three projects that were the subject of the Workshop. Furthermore, he discussed the project development phases and implementation modalities, including online means for collaborative work.

C. PARTICIPANTS

37. The Workshop was attended by 41 participants from eight countries, including decision-makers of telecommunication operators and service providers from ESCWA member countries, in addition to representatives from Governments, businesses, associations, and national, international and regional organizations, and selected experts in the field. The list of participants is contained in annex I of this report.

D. AGENDA

38. The agenda of the Workshop is summarized and set forth below.

- “1. Opening: statements by ESCWA and Alcatel; and Regional plan of action for building the information society and follow-up on implementation.
2. Market information systems (MIS): ESCWA study on ICT for employment creation and poverty alleviation; market information systems: Alcatel-Manobi partnership; agribusiness value-added services for successful business models for GSM operators; working group project discussions.
3. Broadband access development with DSL: broadband in the Arab world; user-centric broadband vision – how to enhance and develop information society; broadband regulation in France; working group project discussions.
4. Partnership Centre for value-added applications: Alcatel's Regional Cairo Partnership Space; discussions with potential partners.
5. Closing.”

E. DOCUMENTS

39. A list of the documents that were submitted to the Workshop is contained in annex II of this report.

Annex I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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Annex II

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

Symbol	Title
1. Background documents	
No symbol	Agenda
No symbol	Information note
E/ESCWA/ICTD/2004/4	Regional plan of action for building the information society
E/ESCWA/ICTD/2005/2	Information and communication technologies for employment creation and poverty alleviation
E/ESCWA/ICTD/2005/WG.2/2	Project proposal - Enhanced broadband access through Pilot national applications
E/ESCWA/ICTD/2005/WG.2/4	Project proposal - Market information systems for agriculture and fishing businesses
E/ESCWA/ICTD/2005/WG.2/3	Project proposal - Partnership space for incubating telecommunications projects
2. Presentations	
No Symbol	ICT for employment creation and poverty alleviation
No Symbol	Regional Plan of Action for Building the Information Society and follow-up on implementation
No Symbol	Market information systems Alcatel/Manobi Partnership
No Symbol	Agribusiness value-added services for successful business models for GSM operators
No Symbol	Broadband in the Arab world
No Symbol	User-centric broadband vision – how to enhance and develop information society
No Symbol	Broadband regulation in France
No Symbol	Alcatel's regional Cairo partnership space
